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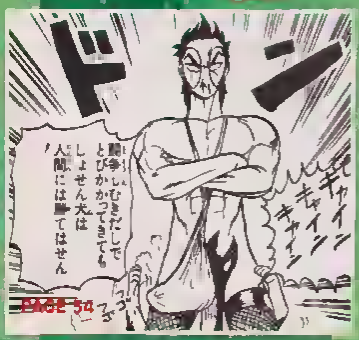
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WIN! PATLADOR BOX SETS Q1 WHAT'S THE NAME OF NOA IZUMI'S LABOR?
A. GRIFFON B. ALPHONSE C HERCULES D. BRIAN

EDITORIAL

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US, HAPPY BIRTHDAY DEAR J-FAN, HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO US.

Yes that's right, we're one month old already. Boy does time fly by when you're drunk....er, having fun.

Well, we survived our first convention (just) and if you weren't there, why not? No that's no excuse. I'll expect to see you again next year. A big thankyou to everyone who made us feel welcome and it was nice to meet you all face to face. For a full report see the article in this issue.

LOVE IS IN THE AIR

Congratulations are in order for not only have Lewis Sharman (convention committee member) and his young lady-friend Karen Ashdown got engaged, but during the closing ceremony 'Dragon' of the London Anime Club proposed to his girlfriend and received the positive to great applause (it must be something in the water). From all of us here at J-FAN, we wish you all the happiness in the world and hope the future holds nothing but joy. DMEDETO.....







Well, we thought you might like to have a look at J-FAN Towers. As you can see it has a rather Cornish, 'tin miney' feel to it but at least there's good air conditioning. The chimney currently has all of this issues prizes stuffed up it.

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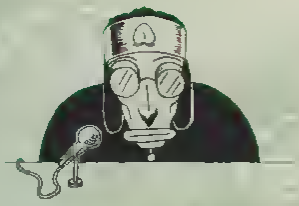
DODEKAIN story and artwork © Masayuki Fujiwara
Translation and touch up © Antarctic Press

All submissons and correspondence to be sent to the editorial address below

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EBONY PUBLISHING LTD
TREVITHICK HOUSE
MOORSWATER
LISKEARD
CORNWALL
PL14 4LH
PHONE: (01579) 340100
FAX. (01579) 340200

Printed in England.
Distributed by SM Distribution London.

WIN! STREET FIGHTER II POSTERS Q2 IN THE ORIGINAL SFII, WHAT IS SAGAT CALLED?
A. VEGA B. BLANKA C SAGAT D CONSTANCE



J-FAN NEWSDESK

PEACH Hi there guys and gals and welcome again to the only place where you ll find the hottest gossip around! And speaking of hot, the sun is a real scorcher today as I relax in this desolate post-apocalyptic setting Yes indeedy those crumbling old buildings thrusting forth from the barren ground like the teeth of some enormous predator are surely wibbling a bit in the heat Yerz So as I lean back into my deckchair and sip on my Horlicks here s the first spattering of news.

NOT FOR MEN

If you are female and into anime you may be feeling a little frustrated But fear no longer as the first gals only anime club has arrived! Being male I m in no position to comment so I ll let the flyer do the talking: *"That's right! ANIME BABES is an all-female anime club that encourages fan activity We offer fan contacts, the opportunity to trade OSTs and tapes with other females and a newsletter that is tailored to your needs Most of all, we want the world to know we exist ANIME BABES hopes to build up a following of females who will help to get the female point of view heard and to get more 'girls stuff' released into the UK market We're sure that you want to see this too, so for more details just send an SSAE to*
Lisa Munns, 4 Trevallyn Road, Launceston, Cornwall, PL15 7HN
And there you have it And no writing in pretending to be female guys C mon, you know who you are.

PEACH Of course, no Newsdesk would be complete without a guest reader so say hello Kenshiro the ONLY Fist of the North Star!
KEN I am honoured to be here Mr Peach
PEACH Indeed you are I understand that you are somewhat capable in the area of self defence What do you find most appealing about your particular style of combat?
KEN I like to scream in a high pitched voice It makes me feel like a schoolgirl again
PEACH Uh right Well I think we'd better have some more news now

BYE BYE RANMA

Diamond a division of Titan, are no longer handling the distribution of Viz comics This monumentous task has been handed over to Capitol a smaller company who deal far less in the UK and because of niggles like minimum orders and the need to open special accounts etc this means that many of the smaller comic shops will find it increasingly difficult to get hold of Viz products This seems to be a bad move for Viz and we can hope that as their sales start to drop they will see the error of their ways and revert to their old company But until then you may have to start hunting down those copies of Ranma

IRRELEVANT

Why is it that pocket Japanese dictionaries often miss out fairly common or slang words but have entries like
Umihozuki - The brooch-pouch of the Hemifusus
Ternatanus' in them? It s surely one of the great mysteries of the Universe

KEN nice little pink tutu I've-
PEACH I must stop you there as the viewers are back You've got several brothers Ken What are they like?
KEN Oh they re a riot! You know one of them threw me over a cliff once as a lark! How we laughed!
PEACH That s just great but I m getting a cue that it s your turn to read some news
KEN OK What do I do?
PEACH. Just look at the monitor and read what you see

GET ORGANISED

Have you ever written something down then forgotten where it is? Or maybe you've missed some spleen cringingly important event sometime in your past Well this need never happen again as Viz Communications of America have released the Ranma 1/2 Organiser
Complete with a pen notebook,



RIOT - Just one of the many VIZ comics that will be missing from the shelves of your local comic shop?



ANIME BABES! The all-gal club.

diary and address book and bound in a full colour maghetic locking case the only thing you ll have to remember is where you put it And if that isn't good enough for you, you ll also get 2 sheets of Ranma stickers to help you spread the word Groovy.

IRRELEVANT

KEN I enjoyed that I'm a jolly dancing pixie, you know
PEACH I m sure you are
KEN· Can I do it again? Please? Please? Purrleeeaaaseee?
PEACH Alright, go ahead.

BITE SIZE GAL

One of the more popular British fan manga titles is Josh "ONI" Clark s ARIEL - HIGH SCHOOL DEVIL GIRL and now you can have the chance to have your very own Ariel as Ground Zero Games the leaders in anime style miniatures are planning a figure of the girl herself

RUMBLE RUMBLE

Many things on this Earth emit low grumbling sounds that are the first signs of change My stomach for example, or maybe the odd volcano But currently there is a grinding noise coming from deep in the bowels of Manga Entertainment Two very pleasant gentlemen (Andy Frain and Martin Bower) in the aforementioned company are how shall I put it *not there anymore* Far be it from us to spread rumour as to why but this may signify a possible change in direction Could we be seeing more subtitled anime from them in the future? Who knows? That is all I have to say

PEACH Look you're pretty good at this How would you like to come back next month and do the weather for us?
KEN Sooper dooper! I m so excited I · ATATATATATAHH! Sorry I couldn t help that.
PEACH It s OK Have a mint

WHAT ABOUT US?

Not content with running the much loved/hated SAILOR MOON on US TV Autumn 96 will see the girly sentai anime MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH on their screens But 'what about us Brits?' I hear you cry Sod all for us I m afraid (as usual)

VARCHAR ANIME

What with STREET FIGHTER II FATAL FURY and SAMURAI SPIRITS/SHOWDOWN It seems to be becoming a trend to turn the latest beat em up's into anime series these days The latest in the long line is SEGA's pioneering 3D jobby VIRTUA FIGHTER which is airing on Japanese TV Character designers have gone for the traditional human look which is a bit of a missed opportunity really It would have been nice for them to have taken a risk in giving the characters an angular appearance like in the arcades. Oh Well

KEN You know I was quite a singer when I was young I could shatter a glass from ten meters
PEACH· Cor you need some expensive voice training to do that
KEN· Not really. Just a very tight corset
PEACH· I wouldn t know AHEM Well I m afraid that s all the news for this time Next month I ll be visiting a certain part of Japan but you ll have to wait and see where and when! See you!
KEN Later.



MAGIC KNIGHT RAYEARTH - Exploding onto your TV screen next year (If you live in America that is).



He's lazy. He's careless. He's totally unpredictable. And he's here to give you the lowdown on this most irresponsible of anime series. Take it away Kevin Cuo...

IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLOR began life as a story by the author Taira Yoshioka, who is better known in the UK for HUMMINGBIRDS. Like HUMMINGBIRDS, TYLOR is a nasty satire, but instead of the entertainment business, it ridicules the tradition of macho war stories. After leaping to television, TYLOR took what appeared to be a backwards step , back into the world of OAV's, possibly because its storyline was a bit too close to the mark for mass audiences. But, in 1995 it's still going strong with yet another OAV series, called NEWTYLOR

The appeal of TYLOR, if indeed it does appeal to the Japanese (see below) is easily explained. Captain Tylor is the ultimate slacker, a real no-hoper in a culture that prizes hard work and dedication. And yet his utter gormlessness carries him far, he becomes a commander by accident, becomes the lust of his crew

an alien quean, and blunders through his career by doing absolutely nothing. Japanese kids, tired of the harrowing cramming for exams and pressure to perform, might easily find something compelling in this tale of success through stupidity. Even the man's name is synonymous with being a 'loser'. The Japanese spelling of his name, 'Taira' is not only a pun on the name of the author, it is also the name of the clan who lost the Japanese civil war many centuries ago

IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLOR is riddled with jibes at Japanese popular culture. Tylor is the exact opposite of a Japanese martial hero. He's constantly undisciplined, disloyal, lacherous and above all IRRESPONSIBLE. Once he blags his way into the military, he's given an antique, battered, aging fart of a ship ('The Slight Wind'), whose previous crew committed mass suicide from depression. The noble warriors he commands are a gang of thugs, the ship's



nurse is an alien spy, and the commanding officers would like nothing better than to chuck him out of the airlock. The valorous officers are all named after martial icons, with names like Fuji and Mifune, but their blinkered nationalism always ends up succumbing to Tylor's stupidity. It's as if the message of TYLOR is aimed right at the apolotical, slacker-generation of modern Japan. Forget the doomed excesses of your parents, just have fun and you'll fall on your feet!



In Tylor's first mission as Captain, the disgruntled troops give him a bomb as a present. But before he can open it, dissension in the ranks and the resulting ricochets cause his ship to warp into the middle of an alien war party. Tylor promptly surrenders, much to the consternation of his crew. He then hands the alien commander a gift as a token of his honesty, and as usual, Tylor lucks into a winning situation. The gift he gives them is the very same parcel-bomb that his own troops were going to mutiny with, and when the alien commander opens it on his own shuttle, it's blown to pieces. In the resulting confusion, the other alien ships open fire on each other, and Tylor returns to Earth having won without firing a shot.

This is typical of Tylor's disingenuous victory through failure, and such situations are repeated throughout the series. In another story, Earth Command plant a homing beacon on him and send him towards the enemy fleet. The plan is to blow away the evil Ragions by shooting at the homing beacon, but Tylor loses it on the way back to his ship, the aliens home in on the signal, and find themselves materialising in the middle of the Earth Space Fleet. Thus, Tylor manages to survive again, pulling a victory out of a suicide mission.

No anime would be complete without a complicated love-polygon around the male lead, and TYLOR is no exception. There's not only the girl-next-door, Lt Yuriko Star, and the obsessed alien princess, Queen Azaling Goza. There's also a bevy of beautiful twins, Emi and Yumi, who's light-bulbs are so dim that switching them off would brighten a room. Karumi is an alien spy planted on the Slight Wind, with orders to kill Tylor, but somehow she never quite gets around to it. She's an expert in seducing fine, upstanding officers, but Tylor is such a pervert she isn't prepared for it.



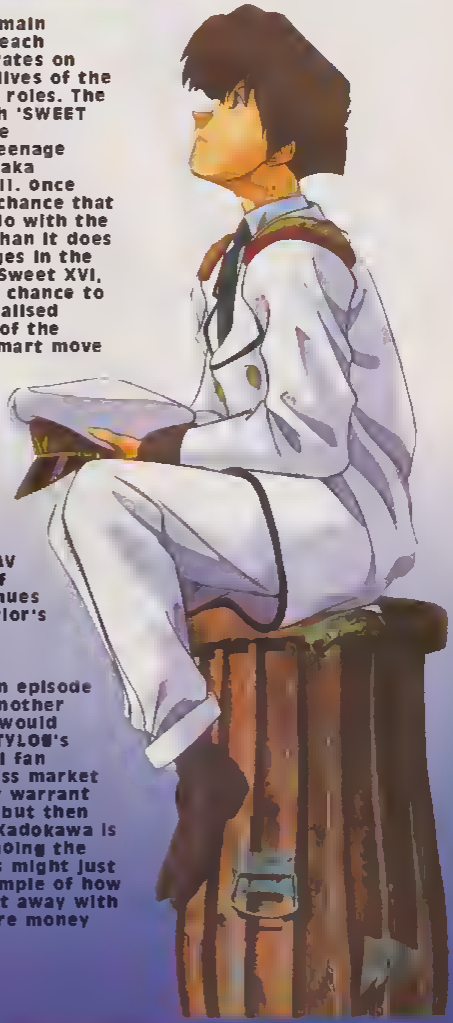
With a 26 episode run on TV, followed by a tell-tale move to 'straight to video' OAV'S, Tylor's success remains somewhat doubtful. There remains a chance that it keeps going as a result of company policy rather than commercial acclaim. After



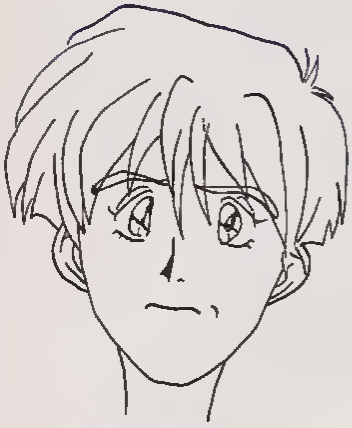
all, NEWTYPE publishers Kadokawa Shoten have a stake in the profits, and it's relatively easy for them to give each new incarnation another plug in their magazine. There have even been rumours that TYLOR remains a 'go-project' because it is a company in-joke. The man responsible for Kadokawa's anime/manga line is the privileged rich-kid Haruki Kadokawa, who enjoys a reputation with the more conservative directors as a spoiled brat given a 'trashy' wing of the company to keep him out of trouble.

Haruki Kadokawa is exactly the kind of executive who would find TYLOR's plot really funny. A self-confessed slacker given control of a dead dog of an organisation, turning it into a winner through just doing as he pleases... Kadokawa Shoten's anime and manga line is often regarded as Haruki's personal indulgence, and when he was arrested for drug smuggling a couple of years ago, there was a real fear in the company that Haruki's departure from the board would also result in the cancellation of his beloved NEWTYPE. But it would appear that NEWTYPE, albeit a bit of an embarrassment in a company whose main business is school books, is still too much of a money-spinner to stay under for long, and the magazine continues

So too does IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLOR, with a new six-episode series out in late 1995. In a new twist, TYLOR is no longer the main character, since each episode concentrates on incidents in the lives of the many supporting roles. The series began with 'SWEET XVI', a tale of the misunderstood teenage invader Azaling (aka Empress Goza XVII. Once again,there is a chance that this has less to do with the appeal of Tylor than it does with other changes in the anime business. Sweet XVI, for example, is a chance to make the marginalised Azaling the star of the entire video, a smart move when you consider she is played by Hiroko Kasahara, who has gained new popularity through her role as the eponymous Armitage III in Pioneer's new OAV series. At time of writing, it continues with a look at Tylor's maverick pilot assistant K.O Andressen. Each character gets an episode to themselves, another indulgence that would seem to reflect TYLOR's position as a real fan favourite. No mass market trash would ever warrant such treatment, but then again, if Haruki Kadokawa is really masterminding the whole thing, this might just be one more example of how much you can get away with if you've got more money than sense..



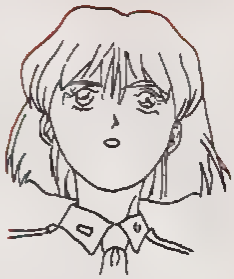
IRRESPONSIBLE CHARACTERS



Justy Ueki Tylor (20)
A complete failure in the modern business world, Tylor joins the military in search of the easy life. A fine candidate for the dimmest, laziest anime character ever.



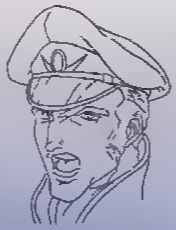
Azaling Goza XVI (16)
Azaling used to be your everyday alien princess until her fathers death in suspicious circumstances suddenly made her the ruler of an alien empire. Now her Grand Vizier has plunged her into an interstellar war which she could do without and she yearns to return to the carefree days of her childhood. And that Captain Tylor reminds her ever so slightly of the little pet she used to have when she was a girl.



Yuriko Star (19)
A fine upstanding Lieutenant Commander, anime cynics can easily pigeon-hole Yuriko as the girl-next-door model. Like Shinobu in Urusei Yatsura, she has 'future wife' written all over her, just as soon as our hero stops frolicking with alien babes. Yuriko is a year younger than Tylor, and most disapproving of his activities.



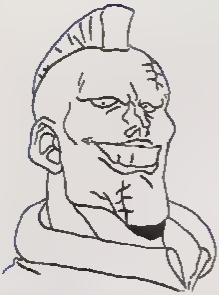
Emi and Yumi Hanner (17)
Two gorgeous twins with a good line in silly Japlish T-shirts, the Hanners are the daughters of a retired Admiral. While they certainly haven't inherited his looks, their haphazard ways of flying ships seems to indicate they've inherited at least some of his skills.



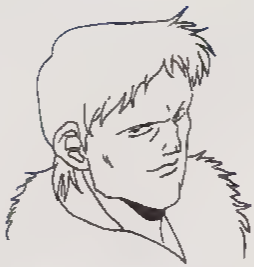
Sub-Lieutenant M. Yamamoto (25)
Tylor's alter ego in many ways although underneath it all it's likely that the boys could be sharing the same brain cell. Yamamoto is a parody of military efficiency, strict, loyal, patriotic but tragically stupid. He would have commanded the Slight Wind were it not for Tylor's sudden arrival, and if his sense of ultra-discipline is anything to go by, he would have been thrown out the airlock by the Irate troopers long ago.



Staff Sergeant Harumi (3)
Built to be the sexiest thing alive, Harumi is in fact a genetically-engineered creature designed by the Raglon empire for spying on Tylor and his crew. She's supposed to cause chaos in the ranks, but unfortunately Tylor does that job all too well on his own.



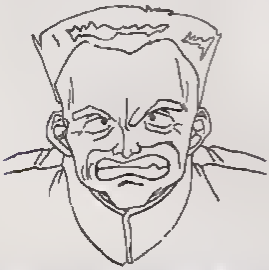
Sergeant Cryburn (32)
The leader of the marines on board the Slight Wind the mohicanned Sergeant Cryburn is a psychopath who believes in shooting first and not asking any questions at all.



Lieutenant Andressen (28)
Intelligent and ruthless with a yearning to be a fighter pilot Andressen wasn t posted to the dead end job on the Slight Wind because he was too stupid but because he was too unpredictable in a fight

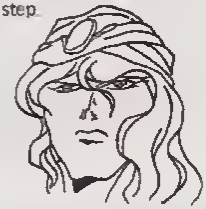


Premier Wang (33)
He may look like the Sheik of Araby but Wang is a nasty piece of work It would be slanderous to even suggest that he might be responsible for the death of his Emperor Goza XV, so I won t even mention it Wang s the man to blame for the war between Terra and the Ragion Empire so watch your step.

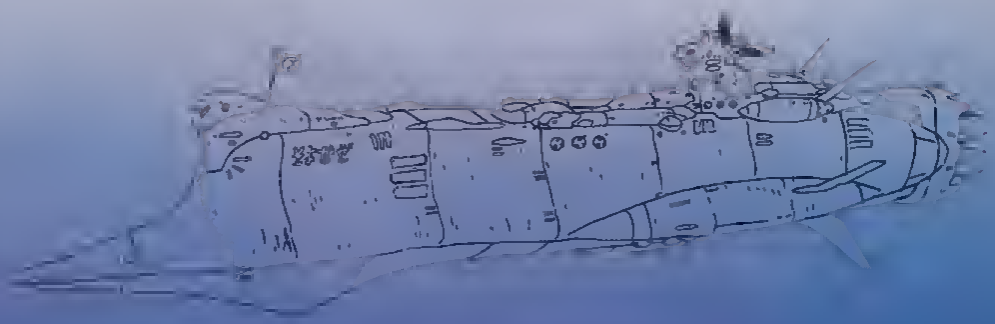




Admiral Mifune (55) and Admiral Fuji (51)
Although they continue to tell Tylor how happy they are with his heroic deeds.. the Admirals are the ones who keep on dreaming up suicidal missions for him. Their desire to get rid of Tylor eventually makes them more dangerous than the enemy



Captain Ru Baraba Dom (23)
Only one thing protects Azaling from the Byzantine machinations of Wang and that s the noble Captain Ru, with his floppy hair and bendy sword Wang knows it too and begins plotting to have both Azaling and Ru killed so that he can have the throne to himself



HOW TO TAKE OVER THE WOR

During the past couple of years Japanese Pop Culture has taken the UK by storm, been seized upon by thousands and embedded itself as part of the modern youth scene. In Japan the story is pretty much the same. Except, of course, that over there the love of anime spills away from the 'young adult' market in both directions and it's nothing new, the Japanese have been watching anime for years. But so far no one has stopped to ask what the differences are between how anime reaches it's audience both in it's native land and over here. It's an important question. The selling of anime determines it's audience, how frequently it's bought and the difference it makes to the lives of the people involved with it. It is possibly one of the greatest unexplored questions in Japanese fandom.

Let's start by taking a quick look at Japan and the UK.

JAPAN

Animation is a popular form of mass entertainment and a TV staple with top shows getting prime time slots
People have grown up with animation, it's more acceptable for an adult to watch 'cartoons' (Blasphemy! Ed). But it's not acceptable to be too obsessive about them. In Japan, Otaku (a die-hard fan Ed.) is very much a derisory term.
There's a close link between manga and anime. Manga is read in bulk by people of all ages; in fact 90% of all Japanese women read manga (compare that with the UK!)
Most top anime releases start out as manga.
There's an immense fan base; the fans are highly active and motivated people who eagerly await the next instalments of their favourite shows
Merchandising is a fact of life
Anything that's popular has merchandising produced for it - ranging from CD's to collectors cards, from clothing to, well just about anything. Often the merchandising is more important than the show. Some releases (especially by Bandai), are 25 minute adverts for the merchandise

UK

Anime has cult status - it's a cool thing to be into
There are fewer casual anime buyers. Though their numbers are increasing.
The active fan-base in the UK is much, much smaller than Japan.
Anime is mainly bought by people in the 16 - 24 year old age range, in general terms it's not spread out to the general population, though several video labels are attempting to gain a wider family audience.
It's viewed with distrust by most of the mass broadcast media, although recent experiments with TV showings on BBC2 and Channel 4 have been successful
Hardly any adults read comics. To do so is often seen as a sign of immaturity or weirdness
Very little merchandising is directly licensed and produced in this country for video releases.

Let's look how at two of the major players in the British anime scene.

Manga Entertainment were the first to push anime, and gained a name specialising in the more adult and sensationalist side of the market. In fact they've become so successful that for many people the words manga and anime have become interchangeable. Pioneer on the other hand are the only Japanese creators of anime to be working directly in the UK, concentrating squarely on more wholesome releases which can be enjoyed as family viewing. The important point here though is that family viewing does not mean children's shows, but something that all members of the family can enjoy.

The UK's No 1 - Manga Entertainment

Over the past few years, Manga Entertainment has yanked anime out of the fanboy closets and into the mass market. Their video releases frequent the charts and have opened up whole new sections in video stores. They've managed this by having a product that people want, and by some very



TO THE WEST
Examples showing how video companies sometimes 'Westernise' the covers to anime, with a direct aim at the male mass-market.

WIN! A GENUINE GAIARTH CEL Q3. HOW DO ITAL & CO TRAVEL AROUND?
A. ROBOTIC HORSES B. TANKS C. DRAGONS D. DIFFUSION

LD AND ENTERTAIN PEOPLE

Robert Lyn Davies explores the way in which anime is marketed in the UK and Japan



PIONEER s lively design makes no effort to hide it's origins.

cool marketing. Here's how they go about it:

Manga Entertainment believe in having direct contact with their fans, they have a database of 25-30,000 people who all receive direct mailings. Plus there's the Manga club, a body consisting of some 6000 fans who regularly buy Manga Video releases and who have all paid to be club members. They receive copies of MANGAzine, an irregular zine produced by Manga Publishing that's full of previews, articles, special offers and competitions. All of Manga Entertainment s marketing is aimed squarely at their assumed market (who are all 16-24 year old males). You'll find adverts for Manga Videos in media magazines like Empire, in best selling comics like 2000AD, in the video games press and style magazines (Loaded for example).

The Manga Entertainment marketing machine is not content to just place a few glossy adverts to get the message across. Added to this is a huge campaign involving a World Wide Web site, the use of in store advertising, cinema screenings, TV advertising and a massive effort to get anime on TV (you ll be seeing a lot more of this in the coming year). This level of activity is far, far greater than the marketing divisions of most video companies who traditionally have tended to focus on getting video's onto store shelves. In fact it would be true to say that their marketing machine is very much modelled on the way that a record company would work. And we all know how successful they can be at getting sales...

Pioneer LDCE

Pioneer are unique amongst UK anime publishing houses. They are the only original creators of anime operating in the UK (though Manga Entertainment are now getting involved in production), and are the only company operating in both the UK and Japan. However the British arm of Pioneer LDCE is completely independent of it's Japanese parent and though dependant on the Japanese side of the operation for its product, the UK company runs its own marketing and PR campaigns.

For the British side of the operation, the objective is to raise awareness of the product through, not only adverts, reviews and magazine articles, but also via exposure on TV on shows like The Big Breakfast, Live & Kicking, satellite channels such as Nickelodeon and radio by getting soundbites from the latest releases on the air. The team at Pioneer's PR company are convinced that getting characters from their videos recognised is very important. Merchandising is also a vital tool in Pioneer's armoury, with postcards and sweatshirts already being made available to fans.

So how does this differ from the Japanese side of the market ? Well not that much. Character based selling is very important in Japan; one look at the magazines and the wealth of available merchandising will tell you that. It's something that Pioneer have done very well - especially with Tenchi Muyo which leapt from OVA to TV series largely on the strength of it's characters.

The Magazines

Magazines are where the trade and fans converge. So by looking at how three of the biggest mags in the business do their thing, we should be able to learn a thing or two..

First from Japan we have

Newtype

THE anime magazine. Probably the most famous anime/Japanese media publication in the world. Undoubtably the most stylish of the three magazines covered here. Successfully managing to blend an immense number of adverts feature articles, serialised novels, manga, eye-catches, 'How To..' tutorials and reviews within its massive bulk of pages. Like many Japanese publications it prints on both very cheap stock paper and the most expensive, glossiest pages imaginable. Its designers have learned the art of seamlessly

WIN! AD POLICE MINIATURES. Q4. WHICH OF THESE ISN'T A FAMOUS CRIMINAL?
A. BUAKU B. MACHINEGAL C. LUPIN D. O.J.SIMPSON

blending artwork articles and adverts together in a manner which leaves the reader breathless and enthusiastic for its contents.

Anime UK/FX

Anime FX (formally known as Anime UK) is the UK's longest running anime publication. Over the past 5 years it has transformed itself from a small photocopied fanzine into a full colour monthly, at all times asserting its independence of origin and view point. It is also the only anime magazine currently available in this country not to have a translated manga amongst it's pages.

Manga Mania

The voice of Manga Entertainment in the UK, and one of the focal points for their marketing machine it stresses very strongly the links between anime and manga and differs greatly from the other titles considered here in that it's main thrust are the manga (which don't always originate from Japan) lying within it's pages. Added to this are collections of news, reviews and feature articles featuring anime it's creators and other related topics from around the world, which makes it more than an anthology but definitely not less than a magazine. It's home to more full colour advertisements (from various video labels) than any other UK magazine at the time of writing.

As an interesting aside, if you combined Manga Mania and Anime FX, then you'd have something approaching a Japanese anime magazine. (Ta daa! Ed)

Spot the Difference

After exploring (very briefly) the audience in Japan and the UK, taking snapshots of some magazines and video companies, it's time to play spot the difference. After all what what IS the difference between how anime is sold over here and in it's home?

Well, in a glib kind of way there are very few actual differences in the techniques used to reach the audience of anime. In terms of style pop culture marketing is pop culture marketing. Okay, so the UK doesn't have the direct sale only videos of Japan, and doesn't (so far) relay so much on the TV viewing or manga sales to generate attention, but in both countries the objective of the marketing men is the same; catch the fans and keep them hooked. And it's



NEWTYPE: Japan's premier animation magazine.

done, broadly speaking, in the same way via spectacular eye-popping adverts, in store deals, special offers, trailers etc. The main point is that the fan has become the focus of attention. Anime marketing teams do not rely on people just knowing that the stuff is out there or by expecting them to spot it in the shops.

But the techniques being used disguise the real differences between Japan and the UK. In Japan all that matters is getting to your audience and maximising sales potential. In this country the job is two-fold: maximise sales and generate a culture of people who will go out and buy a video series without any prior knowledge of what it's like. Most conventional video series are the presentation of well known TV shows in a convenient package like the wealth of Star Trek episodes or classic 50's and 70's shows that are now available. What's so different about anime is that it's come along with a new and alien style, without any cultural back-up and has become massively popular. The marketing and PR people are now faced with the task of making it permanent. Cult phenomena's tend not to be long-lived. When you market anime in this country, you have to first sell it and then get so many people interested in it, that its growth and popularity will spread from the young SF fans out into the general population. In other words - they want to make conditions for anime in this country pretty much the same as they are in Japan.

So perhaps anime marketing and PR techniques are the wrong things to concentrate on. Instead I'll leave you with some questions. Is anime a fad, or is it like the much publicised information superhighway, another sign of the globalisation of culture? And are we watching the birth of new generations whose cultural identity comes not from where they live but solely the time they live in? Or has it already happened and no-one has noticed.

(MY THANKS TO MANGA ENTERTAINMENT AND PIONEER LDC FOR THEIR ASSISTANCE IN THE PRODUCTION OF THIS ARTICLE)

WIN! MACROSS BOX SET Q5. WHAT WAS THE MACROSS CALLED IN THE US SERIES, ROBOTECH? A. SDF1 B. THE MACROSS C. VALKYRIE D. THE MACEK

OH MY GODDESS! PART5

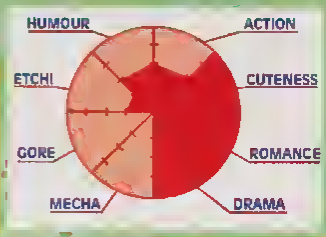


DATA 1

LABEL
ANIME PROJECTS
RUNNING TIME
40 MINS
CERTIFICATE
U
PRICE
£12.99 (SUB)

SCENARIO

In this the final part (for the moment) of the series the story is continued directly from part 4. Keiichi and Belldandy are forced apart, as when then are close Bugs in the system cause all manner of events which mainly boil down to things exploding. And if that wasn't bad enough The Lord has given Belldandy a Recall Notice so she has to return to the Heavens in two days. Knowing this Keiichi works night and day so he can afford to buy her a ring - a promise made in the past but when he doesn't know



[illegible] but you [illegible] as soon as [illegible] buy it. This tape, as with all [illegible], is faultless. The art and animation is perfect, the subtitles are clear and easy to read, and the songs... Oh! The songs. The word catchy is an understatement and I guarantee that you'll be tapping and maybe even singing along (if you're quick enough) by the end of the series. Speaking of which, this happens to be the end. NOOO. It's not fair! I want more! What's that? More in Japan? DORAAAAAY! Until then, you'll just have to keep watching those tapes, and catch me [illegible] for a feature on the series. Till then

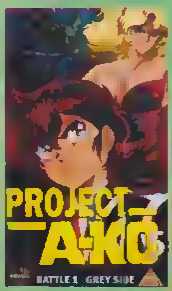
[illegible] many anime around as there are, that are as powerful as this (Gunbuster for example), and that is a real shame. OH MY GODDESS! It is simply brilliant, wonderful, superb and just plain bloody smart. The story is utterly engaging and the final climactic scenes are both acted and directed perfectly. On top of that is the usual high standard of animation and chara design, plus a soundtrack that's so good, it makes you want to eat it. Obviously, if you've got the cash then you'll buy this anyway. But if you haven't you are losing out on one of the best anime around.

VERDICT: TOO GOOD FOR MERE WORDS!!!

DATA 2

STAFF
DIRECTOR
Hiroaki Goda
CHARA DESIGN
Matsubara Hidenori
MUSIC
Takeshi Yasuda
CAST
KEIICHI
Masami Kikuchi
BELLDANDY
Kikuko Inoue
URD
Yumi Toma
SKULD
Aya Hisakawa

PROJECT A-KO 5

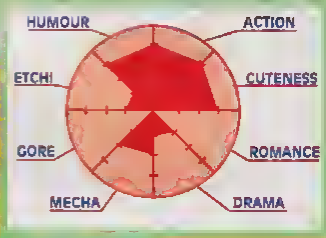


DATA 1

LABEL
MANGA VIDEO
RUNNING TIME
50 MINS
CERTIFICATE
PG
PRICE
£9.99 (DUB)

SCENARIO

A-KO and B-KO are monster hunters on a distant planet. C-KO is the daughter of a rich company boss. All is fine until Lila and Crush, two kidnappers, arrive on the scene to swipe poor old C-KO for their boss Gail, who needs her to resurrect the nasty demon Xena and remould the universe to his liking. Ickle chap!
Can the heroines save poor C-KO before the universe is taken over by a three headed space dragon, and will A-KO defeat Lila the Cleavage from Hell. A-KO GREY SIDE takes the girls to a new dimension and well, leaves them there! Part one of two.



[illegible] be done

[illegible] was really [illegible] to release. Now [illegible] never win an Oscar, [illegible] doesn't exactly help. There just [illegible] to be something missing. The animation is standard fare, the music lively but the script is fractured and the is delivered with all the feeling and nuance of a Charlie Brown cartoon for three year olds. I would say for complet sts only but would recommen» that you turn the sound down, put on your fave anim CD and enjoy the visual gags. Mr Maruten is a dude though

VERDICT: NAY, NAY AND THRICE NAY!!!

DATA 2

STAFF
DIRECTOR
Katsuhiko Nishijima
CHARA DESIGN
Hideyuki Motohashi
Katsuhiko Nishijima
MUSIC
Kenji Kawai
CAST
Venus Terzo
Cathy Weseluck
Lynda Boyd
Ted Cole
Paul Dobson

GHOST IN THE S

ONE SMALL STEP FOR CINEMA. ONE GIA

Not since the release of AKIRA has there been such a major event in the UK anime scene, but now another page of history has been written. For the first time ever, a Japanese animated movie is being given a simultaneous release in Japan, Britain and the U.S. Never before has an anime received such international recognition and it can only lead to greater things.

Based on the manga by Masamune Shirow (APPLESEED, DOMINION), the film has been co-produced by KODANSHA, BANDAI VISUAL and MANGA ENTERTAINMENT, the first ever western partner in a Japanese anime project. GHOST IN THE SHELL received it's premiere at the Odeon Cinema in Leicester Square on Saturday November 11th, as part of the London Film Festival.

As for the storyline by the year 2029, cyber-technology has advanced to such a stage that the human brain can now be linked to computer networks via interfaces in the back of the skull. An elite group of law enforcers called the SHELL have been given these cybernetic implants to help in their fight against the criminals and terrorists of this high tech world. But as with every advance in technology there is a price to pay

Setting new standards in animation by incorporating the use of state of the art computer graphics and the traditional cel animation, GHOST IN THE SHELL is a wonder to behold. But as well as the animation there is also a warning to be heeded, that of the direction technology and medical progress might take.





GHOST IN THE SHELL
CERTIFICATE: 15
RUNNING TIME 85 minutes
Directed by..... Mamoru Oshii
Created by Masamune Shirow
Screenplay by..... Kazunori Ito
Music Director Kenji Kawai
Mechanic Design. Shoji Kawamori
Character Design. Keisuke Oikura
Hiroyuid Okiura

WIN! DEVIL HUNTER YOKO SET Q7. WHAT DOES YOKO LOSE WHEN SHE TRANSFORMS?
A. HER CLOTHES B. HER SANITY C. HER FRIENDS D. HER LUNCH

SHELL

ANT LEAP FOR ANIME.



CAST
Batrau... Richard George
Kusanagi... Mimi Woods
Aramaki... William Frederick

THE J-FAN OPINION

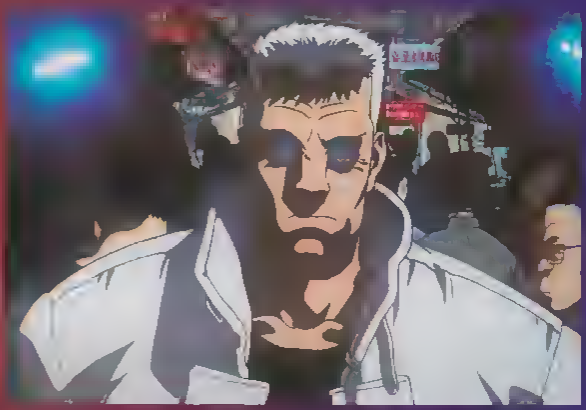
This film has certainly received it's fair share of hype in the anime world, but is it up to scratch?

The storyline is superb, with an incredible amount of thought and imagination going into it, to create one of the most engaging situations since Blade Runner. The ideas within are well thought out and handled with care and realism, and you constantly find yourself thinking, 'What a great idea!' For a Mamoru Oshii film, there is far less conversation than you may expect, making it generally more watchable and avoiding any slow and uninteresting scenes.

The standard of animation, while superb, is not quite as good as was expected. Don't misunderstand - there are some excellent moments, but I was looking forward to something that could blast Akira out of the water, and it doesn't. A special mention must go to the title sequence though, which with some very fitting and haunting music, is one of the most memorable scenes in the movie.

If there is one thing that I could fault the film on, it is the ending. Or lack of one. All throughout you are carried along on the cleverness of the story and the animation and suddenly after a brief battle scene, The End. With all the freedom in making anime, I wish that more could have been done - it just doesn't build up to an almighty climax that Akira so easily delivered. Also, while the dubbing is acceptable, it doesn't quite have the feeling that a major film requires.

But don't let that put you off. It's still a decent movie and well worth seeing.



GHOST IN THE SHELL will open at the following cinemas from December 8th (call for details):

B'HAM	MGM	0121 682 3323
BRIGHTON	MGM	01273 818094
BRISTOL	SHOWCASE	0117 972 3434
GLASGOW	MGM	0141 332 9513
LEEDS	SHOWCASE	01924 420065
LONDON	MGM Trocadero	0181 970 6015
M'CHESTER	MGM Salford Quays	0161 873 7279
N'HAMPTON	MGM	01604 583 535
N'HAM	SHOWCASE	0115 9866766
SLOUGH	MGM	0181 970 6014



VIDEO REVIEW

ZERAM

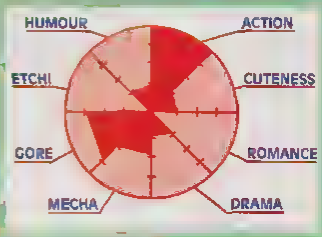


DATA 1

LABEL
MANGA VIDEO LIVE
RUNNING TIME
97 MINS
CERTIFICATE
18
PRICE
£13.99 (DUB)

SCENARIO

Zeram a deadly biological weapon and all-round bad guy is on his way towards Earth Cripes! But waiting for him is Ilya, a professional bounty hunter and all-round babe Blimey! To make her bounty easier to collect, Ilya traps Zeram in a dimensional zone created by her electronic partner However one thing she doesn t expect is a couple of innocent (and pretty stupid) humans, caught in the zone by accident and finally stuck there alone with only the seemingly unstoppable Zeram for company Spooks!



H R Giger meets The Terminator with a bit of Power Rangers thrown in for good measure Pity it doesn t work This story and script are rather flat and I ve been more scared by Gremlins 2 There are a few nice visual effects but these are so small as to make no major difference I know that I ll get in trouble for saying this girls but the only reason for watching this film is Yuko Moriyama As for Zeram himself I thought he d be a lot taller on film I can only hope that the anime version is better

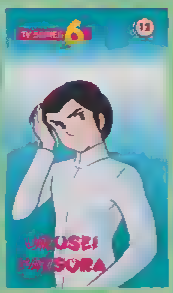
Also What s with the names? On the box it s IRIA (as it should have been) but in the film it s ILYA Continuity please

VERDICT: IT COULD HAVE BEEN BETTER

DATA 2

STAFF
DIRECTOR
Keita Amemiya
STORY
Hajime Matsumoto
SCREENPLAY
Keita Amemiya
Hajime Matsumoto
CAST
Yuko Moriyama
Kunihiko Iida
Yukijiro Hotaru
Mizuho Yoshida
Sachi Kashino

URUSEI YATSURA TV VOL 6

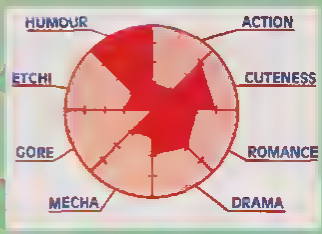


DATA 1

LABEL
ANIME PROJECTS
RUNNING TIME
100 MINS
CERTIFICATE
12
PRICE
£12.99 (SUB)

SCENARIO

On this latest tape of alien weirdness after eating some candy made by Lum Ataru finds himself splitting into two causing great confusion among his family Also an attractive female ninja goes looking for a secret scroll which (of course) Ataru has accidentally stumbled across Finally Lum s father arranges for her to attend a matchmaking party but when Ataru finds out (via Ten-chan s big mouth) he sets out to bring the event to a halt As usual weirdness and lunacy are in abundance throughout



After another long wait (thank the [illegible] tape 6 is here The animation is the same the music is the same and the gags are still the same Excellent stuff! Just warming to anyone with the previous tapes One of the episodes is a special which basically recounts all the story so far using clips from previous shows But even ignoring this it still remains as good value for money as with all the others Interestingly one episode involves the dream master Mujaki and his pig who go on to be redesigned for the second movie Beautiful Dreamer (unfortunately unavailable in the UK!) Another top point is the new ending theme on the last episode It s smart!

[illegible] YATSURA series The highlights of this [illegible] must be the last two stories the first of which concerns a rather nice female ninja who is so useless she wants to leave the profession The best part of this story has to be the tiny ninja guys (they look just like Bombermen!) sent to get her back They deserve their own show The final story features one of my all time fave characters Ten doing what most kids of his age do causing trouble One bonus with this tape is the new end sequence and song While a bit of a shock at first the tune will definitely have you humming along by the end

VERDICT: WILD, WIERD and WONDERFUL!!!

DATA 2

STAFF
DIRECTOR
Mamoru Oshii
CHARA DESIGN
Akemi Takada
MUSIC
Shinsuke Kazado
Fumitaka Anzai
CAST
ATARU
Toshio Furukawa
LUM
Fumi Hirano
SHINOBU
Saeko Shimazu

LOCK ON

UK VIDEO

MANGA ENTERTAINMENT

DEC MACROSS PLUS PART 4 (DUB)
TBA MAD BULL (DUB)
TBA GIANT ROBO (DUB)
TBA VAMPIRE PRINCESS MIYU (DUB)
TBA KABUTO (DUB)
TBA LUPIN III THE CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO (DUB)

KISEKI FILMS

JAN SOL BIANCA 1 £10.99 (SUB) * 55 mins * Cert 15
JAN THE COCKPIT £12.99 (SUB) * 70 mins * Cert 15
TBA DIGITAL DEVIL (SUB) * 45 mins * Cert 18
TBA SOL BIANCA 2 (SUB) * 45 mins Cert 15
TBA MD GEIST

PIONEER

JAN ANIMATAGE III (DUB) * 45 mins*

ANIME PROJECTS

DEC SUPER DEFORMED DOUBLE FEATURE £12.99 (SUB) * 67 mins
DEC BUBBLEGUM CRISIS 5 £12.99 (DUB) * 45 mins * Cert PG
TBA URUSEI YATSURA VOL 7 £12.99 (SUB) * 100 mins Cert 12

EAST 2 WEST

TBA BABEL II VOL 5 £10.99 (DUB) * 55 mins * Cert 15

WESTERN CONNECTION

TBA HUMMINGBIRDS (SUB)
TBA DEVIL HUNTER YOKO (SUB)
TBA DARKSIDE BLUES (SUB)

US VIDEO

AD VISION

JAN CUTEY HONEY VOL 4 $29.95 (SUB) * 60 mins
JAN DEVIL HUNTER YOHKO SPECIAL EXTENDED EDITION $19.95 DUB * 30 mins
JAN GS MAGAI S SHUTEN DOJI THE STAR HAND KID $29.95 (SUB) * 50 mins

SOFTCELL PICTURES

JAN ANGEL OF DARKNESS $34.95 UNEDITED SUB * 45 mins $29.95 EDITED SUB
JAN #3 IFRANTIC FRUSTRATED & FEMALES PART 2 $29.95 SUB * 30 mins
JAN MAGICAL TWILIGHT 3 $29.95 UNEDITED EDITED SUB * 35 mins
JAN NEW ANGEL 3 $29.95 UNEDITED EDITED SUB * 35 mins

ANIMEIGO

JAN SPIRIT OF WONDER: MISS CHINA'S RING $24.95 (SUB) $19.95 (DUB) * 45 mins

ORION

JAN THE SECRET OF BLUE WATER VOL1&2 $14.98 each (DUB) * 80 mins
JAN WICKED CITY LIVE ACTION $49.98 (SUB/DUB) * 88 mins

SOFTWARE SCULPTURES

JAN ZENKI EPS 6 & 7 (SUB) * 60 mins

STREAMLINE

JAN ROBOTECH PERFECT COLLECTION MACROSS VOL 9 $19.95 (DUB)
JAN ROBOTECH PERFECT COLLECTION MOSPEADA VOL 9 $19.95 (DUB)
JAN ROBOTECH PERFECT COLLECTION: SOUTHERN CROSS VOL 9 $19.95 (DUB)

SONY

JAN STREET FIGHTER II THE ANIMATED MOVIE $14.98 (DUB, UNCUT CUT) * 96 mins

US MANGA CORPS

JAN GARACA $29.95 (SUB) * 100 mins
JAN LA BLUE GIRL VOL 3 $29.95 (SUB)
JAN LEGEND OF LEMNEAR $29.95 (SUB) * 45 mins
JAN ZENKI THE DEMON PRINCE VOL 3 $24.95 (SUB)

VOYAGER

JAN STARBLAZERS COLLECTORS EDITION SERIES
SET 2 THE COMET EMPIRE $159.95
SET 3 THE BOLAR WARS $159.95

CELEBRITY HOME ENTERTAINMENT

JAN GAMERA $14.99 (b&w) * 79 mins
JAN GAMERA vs GAOS $14.99 * 87 mins

UK MANGA/BOOKS

MANGA BOOKS

JAN APPLESEED PROMETHIUS UNBOUND
By Masamune Shirow * £7.99
TBA MACROSS II GN £7.99

US MANGA/BOOKS

ACADEMY COMICS

JAN ROBOTECH MECHANICS #1 of 3
By Spanger & William Jang
JAN—ROBOTECH RETURN TO MACROSS #28
By D Spanger & Michelle Birchfield
JAN ROBOTECH THE SENTINELS PRESENTS FERAL WORLD NIGHTMARE ON GARUDA #1
By John & Jason Waltrip
JAN ROBOTECH I THE SENTINELS BOOK IV #2
By Jason Waltrip

ANTARCTIC PRESS

JAN ASRIAL VERSES CHEETAH #1 of2
By Fred Perry * 32 pages
JAN FANTASTIC PANIC VOL 2 #2 of II
By Satoru Yamasaki * 32 pages
JAN—F- II BANDIT #7 of 10
By Ipoongi Bang * 32 pages
JAN HURRICANE GIRLS #4 of 7
By Hiroshi Yakumo * 32 pages
JAN MANGAZINE #42 * 32 pages
JAN NINJA HIGH SCHOOL #50
By Ben Dunn & various * 64 pages
JAN NINJA HIGH SCHOOL (GN) VOL II
By Ben Dunn * 110 pages
JAN SILBUSTER #13
By Ikkou Sahara * 32 pages
JAN VAMPIRE MIYU #4 of 6
By Narumi Kakinouchi * 32 pages

CPM COMICS

JAN CYBER CITY PART 3 #2 OF 2
By Tim Eldred & studio Go! * 24 pages
JAN MD GEIST COMIC BOOK/PHONE CARD ACTION PACK

DAIKAIJU ENTERPRISES

JAN ULTRA FAN #1 THE MAGAZINE OF JAPANESE FANTASY TV 36 pages

DARK HORSE COMICS

JAN—LEGEND OF MOTHER SARAH CITY OF THE CHILDREN #1 OF 7
By Katsuhiro Otomo & Takumi Nagayasu * 48 pages
JAN OH MY GODDESS! SPECIAL SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL
By Kosuke Fujishima 32 pages
JAN GUNSMITH CATS #9 of 10
By Kenichi Sonoda * 32 pages
JAN YOU'RE UNDER ARREST! #2 of II
By Kosuke Fujishima * 32 pages
JAN 3X3 EYES #4 of 5
By Yuzo Takada * 32 pages
FEB DOMU A CHILD S DREAM (GN)
By Katsuhiro Otomo * 240 pages

MANGAJIN

JAN MANGAJIN #52 (Japanese pop culture & language learning)

UK & US MERCHANDISE

1,000 EDITIONS

JAN AKIRA PRINT I & II (680x510mm)
JAN APPLESEED PRINT (680x510mm)
JAN GHOST IN THE SHELL PRINT 1 (680x510mm)

INTELEG

JAN GAMERA 95 SOFT VINYL TOY * $25.95
JAN GAOS 95 SOFT VINYL TOY * $25.95
JAN MACROSS 7 VALKYRIE ROBOTS
JAN DX STEALTH VALKYRIE VF-17S * $69.95
JAN DX STEALTH VALKYRIE VF-17D * $69.95
JAN DX EMERALD VALKYRIE VF-19S * $69.95

COMIC IMAGES

JAN HADES PROJECT ZEORYMER T-SHIRT
JAN LA BLUE GIRL T SHIRT

NEW IN JAPAN

GAME

PRINCESS MAKER 2 SATURN
VIRTUA FIGHTER 32X
IN THE HUNT PLAYSTATION

CD

YAH! YAH! YAH! (NEW TYLOR)
SECOND FIRE (FIRE BOMBER MACROSS 7)
HUMMINGBIRDS FINAL CONCERT

VIDEO

SLAYERS TV VOL 1 50 mins
GUNSMITH CATS CHAPTER 1 30 mins
MACROSS 7 TV VOL 9

MANGA

RANMA 1/2 #35
COOKING PAPA #42
GS MIKAN #19

WE'VE GONE BARMY !!!

Over £500 of prizes to give away

Yes that's right, we've got over £500 worth of prizes for you lucky people. All through the mag you'll find questions related to each prize. These are in the form of multiple choice to make it even easier for you. Simply decide which is the correct answer and enter the letter of your choice in the relevant box below. EASY..... Then, when you've answered as many as you want to, just send the form (or a photocopy) to the address below and wait. All correct entries for each compo will be put in a draw and the lucky winners will be chosen at random from the J-FAN office's executive competition randomiser (OK the bin). A list of the winners will be printed in a later issue and the Ed's decision is final in all matters 'cause I'm the boss, so there!

ALL ENTRIES MUST BE RECEIVED BY JANUARY 10 1996. **ONLY ONE ENTRY FORM PER PERSON.**

MANGA ENTERTAINMENT
4 x Patlabor twin boxed sets
15 x Street Fighter II posters

ANIME PROJECTS
1 x Genesis Surviver Galarth original anime cell
2 x AD Police miniature packs

EAST 2 WEST
1 x B Man After 2 tape set
1 x Kekkou Kamen 2 tape set
1 x Babel II part 1

KISEKI FILMS
2 x Macross boxed sets
2 x Raturn Of The Overfiend boxed sets
2 x Gunbuster boxed sets

WESTERN CONNECTION
1 x Devil Hunter Yoko 2 tape set

PIONEER LDC
10 x Green Legend Ran posters

DEMON RECORDS
1 x Akira Original Japanese Soundtrack CD
1 x Akira Soundtrack CD
1 x Macross Plus 1&2 CD set
1 x Megazone 23 soundtrack CD
1 x Cyber City soundtrack CD

MANDARIN PAPERBACKS
All these titles are published by Hamlyn at £8.99 (except Akira at £10.99) and are available from all good bookshops or call 01933-414000

1 x Akira graphic novel
1 x Domu graphic novel
1 x Memories graphic novel
1 x Gon graphic novel

BOXTREE
1 x Ranma 1/2 1&2 graphic novel set
1 x Street Fighter II graphic novel

BLOOMSBURY
4 x Ironfist Chinmi graphic novel set

SOUND & MEDIA
10 x J-Groove CD's

GALLIN PRESS
1 x Fanzine pack
1 x John Ferguson (fan artist) cell

IF YOU DO NOT WISH TO CUT UP YOUR MAG SEND IN A PHOTOCOPY

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY IN BLOCK CAPITALS

All entries must be received by JANUARY 10th 1995
Only one entry per person

NAME

ADDRESS

POSTCODE

Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5
Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15
Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20
Q21	Q22	Q23	Q24	Q25
Q26	Q27			

Send your completed forms to: 'I'VE SEEN SOME BIG ONES IN MY TIME BUT THIS IS RIDICULOUS' COMPO, J-FAN, EBONY PUBLICATIONS LTD, TREVITHICK HOUSE, MOORSWATER, LISKEARD, CORNWALL PL14 4LH

WIN! UROTSUKIDOJI III BOX SET Q8. WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A NAME FOR THE DEVIL?
A. SATAN B. WORTBURG C. BEELZEBUB D. TEZCATLIPOCA

J-GROOVE - THE SOUL OF JAPAN

SOUND AND MEDIA LIMITED

CAT: MOCD 3017

16 TRACKS 79 mins



At last! Popular Japanese music in England, on a UK label and at a price which doesn t require a second mortgage.

The brains behind this project is Michael Neidus from Sound & Media Ltd and is a chap who deserves to be congratulated. Whilst on a business trip to Japan (lucky devil), he came across a range of artists whose music, ranging from swing/acid jazz to pop/dance he felt could be accepted by the UK market even with the language differences.

The problem was that nothing like this had ever been done before so there were several hurdles to clear during the next two years. The main problems concerned the artists contracts and also the fact that in Japan they have a price fix on new CD s. This means that a new release sells for **£22!!!** (you thought we had it bad over here) and Michael wanted it to retail in the mid-price range. So after a bit of convincing that the project would work, the owners agreed that there might be a market in the UK and permission was given for a release. But as a final snag Michael was restricted to a maximum of three songs per artist and no photos (boo hiss).

Anyway, what about the music itself. Well being a fan of J-pop myself, I can honestly say that this is one of the best albums I ve ever heard. The collection contains tracks from some of the biggest selling artists in Japan over the last two years and includes five tracks from three number one albums. WOW!

On the dance side we have TOSHINORI YONEKURA whose opening track is one of the best on the album. Next up is KATSUMI whose albums are all guaranteed a number one chart entry.

Mellowing down a bit, we have three tracks by KEIZO NAKANISHI who could teach the Gary Barlow's (who?) of this world a lesson or two. His tune '2 a.m.' is my next fave track.

Touching slightly on the seventies feel we have TOMIKO KOBAYASHI with styles ranging from soft pop to 'philly-soul'. MICHIRU KOJIMA s 'Crime of Love' rates as another fave with its rock/dance influences which could sit easily in any club.

Ex-actress/model REIKO KATOH is my new goddess of song (next to IZUMI SAKAI from ZARD) with her bouncy J-pop tunes which I guarantee will have everyone tapping along. Techno-pop raises its head courtesy of the E-ZEE BAND who have recently been taken up by Pioneer's in-house label.

Also on the CD is a bonus track called 'Pieces of Mind' by SANDY LAM. Now this name probably won't set any bells ringing, but she's rather popular in the East. Here's a quick c.v. as proof:
Since 1986 Sandy has had
1 Platinum album
2 Double Platinum albums
14 Number One singles
16 Albums released
25 Sell-out concerts
10 Critically Acclaimed concerts
28 Industry Awards

She also sang the theme songs to NAUSICAA and FAREWELL MY CONCUBINE. It's therefore no wonder that Sound & Media are currently in the process of putting together an album and singles deal for the UK.

Impressed? Hell, I know I am.

This should be in everyone's collection and at the price of around £6 for almost 80 minutes of music, you've really got no excuse. So to put it plainly, buy this CD or the RYO-OHKI gets it!!!

If Sound & Media get a good enough response to this release there could be the possibility of anime related releases in the future, so they need your support. Who knows, in the near future you could be listening to Tenchi on Radio One. You never know.

J-GROOVE should be available to order from all good record shops and should be found on the shelves of the London branches of VIRGIN, TOWER RECORDS and the JAPAN CENTRE.
You can also contact Sound & Media direct at
SOUND AND MEDIA LIMITED
UNIT 3 WELLS PLACE
GATTON PARK BUSINESS CENTRE
NEW BATTLEBRIDGE LANE
REDHILL
SURREY
RH1 3DR



WIN! AKIRA OST CD Q9. WHAT IS RYO CALLED IN THE DUBBED VERSION?
A. ROB B. BOB C. ROY D. JIMMY STARCRUSHER

RANMA-CHAN SPEAKS!!!

by Jim Swallow

One of the most popular anime series of recent years has been the TV adaptation of manga creator Rumiko Takahashi's RANMA 1/2. Takahashi is without doubt the best known female manga and anime name in both the East and the West, responsible for megahit titles like URUSEI YATSURA (aka LUM), MAISON IKKOKU, as well as the RUMIK WORLD and MERMAID series of stories. Capable of running the writing gamut from dark horror to touching romance, Takahashi is best loved for her boy meets girl comedies and their bizarre twists.

RANMA 1/2 – a case in point, perhaps best described as a polymorphic kung-fu sex comedy combining elements as diverse as shape-shifting, fist fighting, food, love, and a high gag content to good effect. RANMA 1/2's title character is an unfortunate soul cursed after falling into an enchanted pool whilst sparring with his father Genma. When splashed with cold water, Ranma transforms into the shape of whoever drowned in said pool. In his case a girl! Ranma-kun (male) becomes Ranma-chan (female), to the consternation of all and sundry, including many folks who end up in love with one of Ranma's forms and in hate with the other. Along with Genma (who also shares the curse, except he becomes a panda) and the Tendo family dojo they live at, Ranma's involvement in martial arts mayhem and romantic shenanigans has spelt success for U.S. dubbers Viz Video and their comics line, Viz Communications.



In animation, an actor's voice is their tool, and to create the best effect for their audience the vocal artist must exercise a huge range of emotion and ability. In Japan the voice actor/actress is known as a *seiyuu*. We got a few words from the owners of the dulcet tones behind the Japanese Ranma-chan, Megumi Hayashibara, and the American Ranma-chan and Akane Tendo, Venus Terzo and Myriam Sirios.

Our three vocal actresses each had a different path to their present careers. Megumi's early days in Tokyo were spent splitting her time between a voice coaching academy and nursing school, before her career took off. As well as voicing Ranma-chan, she has

also played characters in 3x3 EYES VIDEO GIRL AI CATGIRL NUKU NUKU GUNDAM 0083 and most recently BLUE SEED and SLAYERS At home in Japan, Megumi is a popular singing star with several albums and radio shows to her credit Venus experience in the Canadian acting industry has seen her in several animated roles aside from RANMA 1/2 including HE-MAN AND THE MASTERS OF THE UNIVERSE CAPTAIN NINTENDO MY LITTLE PONY T-REX SKYSURFER DARKSTALKER and recently the adapted anime MAGIC KNIGHT A "live" actress as well as a "voice", Venus has guest starred in US TV shows like 21 JUMP STREET, WISEGUY and ROBIN S HOODS Myriam also works in Canada appearing in TV s THE COMMISH and SECRET LIVES as well as voicing FUNKY FABLES and the anime features FATAL FURY THE MOVIE and RANMA 1/2

"The only people who know my face are the dedicated otaku."





RANMA 1/2 was the first experience of Japanese animation for Venus and Myriam (but not the last, as both are swift to point out) and they each brought their own view to the roles of Ranma-chan and Akane following in the footsteps of Megumi and her castmates "She's a wonderful character!" says Venus of her fighting femme alter-ego "A lot of people asked me if she s similar to me." Yes and no! I d like to be like Ranma-chan in the way that she's very aggresive .. And yet she s quite funny at times because she's struggling within herself..." Venus compares Ranma's enforced changes to the inner turmoil that strikes us all in late teendom "She s aggresive, she fights, she screams a lot! She smiles Myriam identifies strongly with the spunky Akene Tendo... "She just brings out the kid in you She s so much fun to play she s just out there! Playing the outspoken elder sister and foil to the dual Ranmas is clearly Myriam s idea of a good time. "She's got such attitude!" she laughs, "And she's got great (character) strengths and weaknesses." The character of Akane is an essential co-star in the RANMA 1/2 love triangle , as the no-nonsense Miss Tendo is betrothed to Ranma-kun in line with an old pact made by Genma and Akane s dad Soun Naturally an arranged marriage with a watery sex change artist doesn t fill her with joy and add to that the fact that Ranma is the first person ever to beat her in martial arts combat and consternation reigns But the role of Ranma-chan has one special quality that sets it aside from other Takahashi highly charged heroines She s a guy Born male cursed with the water-induced shapechange Ranma-chan is the mind and spirit of a boy in the form of a girl So how does a female actor play a mixed up teen like that? Megumi s answer is a spiritual one "Ranma s soul is that of a boy even if he is a girl so she (Ranma-chan) still is manly and masculine even in a female body." She mentions how she would watch the male Ranma actor for cues about vocal inflection. Venus thinks hard on this one before replying, "It goes back to the struggles you have as a kid, as a teenager You re always struggling with who you are .. But the hard part for me is that she s very much a woman, as I play her but she s also very gutsy, like a tomboy I can relate to that." Both Venus and Myriam speak highly of their fellow Ranma voice Megumi after their meeting at a recent American anime convention Myriam describing her as "A powerhouse of energy and very talented". with Venus adding "She s so full of life bringing a lot to the Japanese Ranma-chan It s because of her that there are so many fans But many of the die-hard Ranma 1/2 fans have expressed displeasure at Viz s dubbed release of the series "It s such a great show It d be a shame not to expose to all these other people in America to it " counters Venus "People (outside



her face is less well -known "The only people who know my face are the dedicated *otaku* she jokas Content for the most part to let her voice be her conact with her admirars Megumi isn t afraid to go above and beyond the call of duty when requirad As a trained nurse, she s twice given first aid to fallen fans - bettar than an autograph one would think!

Together these three talented women have brought a set of endearing characters to animated life and given them a heart and soul Like the ancient Greek plays where each actor went masked, these actresses wear ink-and paint masks to entartain and amuse while we marvel at their versatility

(Special thanks to Toshifumi Yoshida Viz Video and the Anime America staff for their assistance)

Japan) should be able to anjoy it Anime fandom has always been known for the intensity of it s following in it s loyalty and passion whether it's source is Japanese, American or European At the sharp end of fan opinion on the changes in the saries Venus and Myriam share similar feelings on the devotees of RANMA 1/2 et al "We love the work, says Myriam "And hopefully we ve been abla to expose new people to Japanese animation who aren't die-hard fans but who may turn out to be die-hard fans (because of this)." She goes on to mention har gratitude to RANMA 1/2 watchers who take the time to comment personally "They ve all been great, they haven t been mean in their opinion of us it s good critisism There are a lot of people who care very much about this " She adds that meeting the fans encourages her to work harder to bring them the RANMA 1/2 they want Venus echoes her words "I really respect (the fans) opinion, and I think it s great that they love the show so much, that they want to preserve it " And while there is mention of the rewritten hipper title songs she opines that "When you have something this good I don t think you have to worry about it because that s what works Megumi, by contrast shies away from public functions and fan gatherings appearing only a few times during her recent trans-Pacific jaunt to San Jose's Anime America 95 While she s happy to perform her songs on stage she likes to keep herself to herself and as a vocal actor rather than a physical one



Manga reviews



GON

By Masashi Tanaka

Equinox Manga/Mandarin Books

£8.99

GON is a very curious manga. It's basically a collection of stories based around a tiny dinosaur in the wild. The unique thing about this, however, is that throughout the entire comic, there is not a single word or sound effect. Add to that a cast made up entirely of animals and you have a very different kind of comic indeed. At first, you may think that it would be difficult to follow what is happening in a wordless comic, but you find that as soon as you start reading, you are carried along without a thought.

The character of Gon himself is not easy to define, as it's tricky not to impose a kind of 'Humanism' onto him. He's a vicious little bugger, intent on bullying almost all of the other creatures he comes across, but when you look at him from an animal point of view, his behaviour is more natural (within reason - real animals don't 'drive' sharks around from inside their mouths. At least I don't think they do...).



The stories themselves are charming and presented in an interesting way, with some superb artwork with both animals and backgrounds excellently detailed. The pace of the stories is fast, often due to Gon galloping around and head-butting things.and in some places it is very funny, especially when the animals begin to take on more Human expressions.

I could easily recommend GON to anyone who wants to read something different, regardless of whether they've read any manga, or comics in general, before as it is very accessible and thoroughly enjoyable. The last page states that 'Gon will return.' Well I, for one, hope that he does.





IRON FIST CHINMI vol 5 & 6

by Takeshi Maekawa

Bloomsbury

£3.99

220 pages

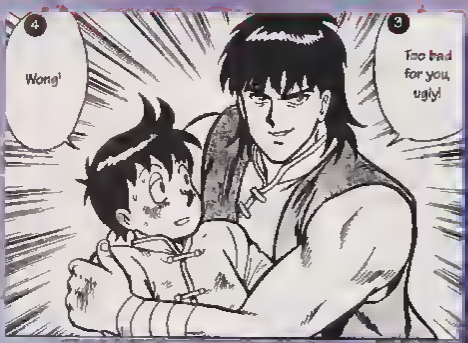
Well he's back. Everybody's favourite pint-sized martial artist, Chinmi returns in two more volumes from Bloomsbury.

In book five Chinmi's sister, Mei Ling, is kidnapped by a gang of bandits who have terrorized the villages around the Dailin Temple. In an attempt to rescue his sister and save the villages, Chinmi challenges the leader of the Black Flame to a duel. Can Chinmi defeat Lord Zangi and his SHOCKWAVE KUNG FU?

Book six sees Chinmi trying to survive a journey through a cave of vampire bats and then being taught an important lesson by Riki, Master of the Art of the Staff, that of movement without thought.

This series just keeps getting better and better. The artwork is superb, with great detail and wonderful action sequences. But as well as this, the story gives the reader some very interesting things to think about. As with most martial arts, there are always aspects which can be incorporated into everyday life. Another major point is that Bloomsbury seem to have heeded the cry from the readers and reduced the amount of glue in the spine. Yes, that's right, you can actually see all of the page now without breaking the spine, and the manga is now a pleasure to read.

Although marketed at kids, this is a manga for everyone, and a quick note to any worried parents: Don't worry. The morals far outweigh any of the violence without a loss of excitement. If you've not bought this already, I suggest a quick jaunt to the local Smith's.



RIOT #1 of 6

By Satoshi Shiki

Viz Comics

$2.75

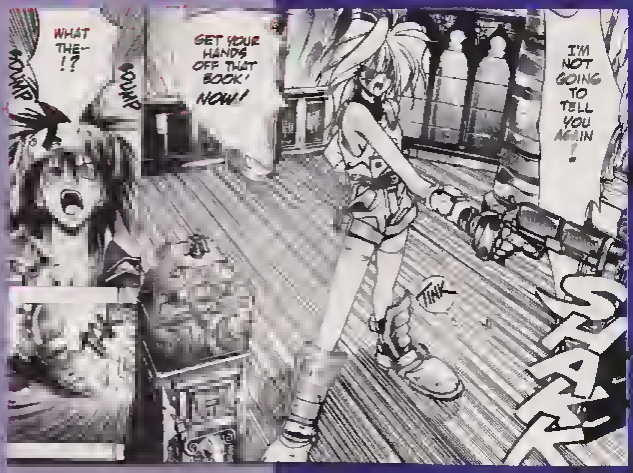
32 pages

It's never easy to give a fair opinion based on the first issue of any comic, but there are always things that spring out. Before that, however, let's have a bit of background on the story.

Riot is the name of a magical book that is supposed to contain the secrets of an ancient treasure. Stolen by a wild loner called Billy The Kid, he hopes to use the book for personal gain i.e. to make a whole bundle of money. However, the guardian of Riot, a young girl called Axel (Axel Rose in the original manga) is hot on his heels.

When Billy is wounded in the chase, his blood falls onto Riot who then promises wisdom in return for aid; but only if he protects Axel from harm.

The first thing that strikes you about RIOT is the artwork. It's distinctive, well drawn with good use of grey-tone, and very appealing. I remember seeing this in Newtype's GENKI comic some time ago, so I was really looking forward to reading it. But whether this is a fault with the original or the translation, it seems very staggered and doesn't flow very well, often due to loads of little comments floating around. But this is only issue 1 and judgement must be reserved until the story has had time to develop. Worth a try.



WIN! AKIRA SYMPHONIC CO g10. WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A FILM BY AKIRA KUROSAWA? A. YOJIMBO B. DREAMS C.KWAIDAN D. RAN

RECONTANIMETED 95

November 3-5 saw the fourth anime convention at Birmingham, and if you've never been to a convention for fear of being mistaken for a sad git with no life, then you really don't know what you're missing.

Held at the Grand Hotel (again), the con boasted three video rooms with some having 24 hours of non-stop anime. Also there were the dealers room (ever popular), a non-video room/private bar, a computer room and of course a fan art room.

VIDEO ROOMS

Over the course of the weekend, we were treated to over 70 individual anime showings, mostly subtitled by fans, but some dubbed and original Japanese crept in as well. About 99.9% of these are unavailable in the UK. As you can imagine, it's impossible to see everything you want to see, which did bring a tear to the eye and the occasional argument. For a rundown on some of the titles shown, see the 'Cripes, What a Dilemma!' section.

NON-VIDEO EVENTS

For those not wanting to veg out in front of a screen the whole time, there were plenty of other distractions to keep you happy. These included talks covering the internet, how to start a fanzine and an important debate of positive roles for females in anime. Unfortunately, the Fan Dubbing Workshop did come across the odd technical hitch i.e. not enough equipment, no colour, not a lot of sound and, oh yes, no scripts! However, the results obtained from improvisation were far funnier than the script could ever be, turning it into an anime version of Whose Line Is It Anyway? There's a thought for next year...

AUCTION

The auction went very well this year, with some competitive bidding and some rather nice items on the list including a Tenchi Muyo card game, a cuddly Lum and a copy of ODIN which, needless to say, nobody wanted. One gripe is that the auction was held at the same time as the showing of Miyazaki's classic PORCO ROSSO. No fair, guys!

MASQUERADE

Yes, this was interesting, to say the least. There was a great turnout for this and as you can see, the quality of the costumes was very high. The favourites were obviously the outrageous Dirty Pair, Lum & Ten-chan, and without a doubt, Sailor Jupiter.





Ultra cute and sweet, these TOTORO fluffy toys were, unfortunately, not for sale.

The opening ceremony held in video room 1. That's one BIG screen!



The range of anime miniatures from Ground Zero Games.



ART ROOM

This year saw a marked reduction in the number of models and a noticeable increase in fan art. The quality of the art was incredibly professional and praise must go to all concerned.

DEALERS ROOM

If there is one place at any convention that spells doom, it has to be the dealers room. Even if you've just won the lottery, you'll come out pennyless. Gracing the entrance was ANIME PROJECTS, showing off the new Lum tape, as well as some books of original anime cells for sale (gimme gimme).

GROUND ZERO GAMES was next up, with a selection of pre-painted anime miniatures (TOTORO in a Star Fleet uniform?) and then the bank manager's dream - SHEFFIELD SPACE CENTRE. Bye bye cash.

The rest of the dealers room was mainly taken up by fanzines, the guys and gals from RED LEOPARD (insert fanfare here) proudly displaying their third issue, which is four times larger than issue 2! Also present were Keith McDowell with Lucy (see 'zine zone) and the next Robert Maxwell, Josh Clark.

THE MASQUERADE

With the convention nearly over, all that was left was the fanzine awards and the results of the con's own questionnaire into fan favourites.

The fanzine results were:





Some of the entries for the masquerade, ranging from sensible to perverse.

WIN! CYBER CITY OEDO 808 COMPLETE THE TITLE CYBER CITY OEDO 808
A. 808 B. 808 C. 512 D. F1



The auction, here showing a Dirty Pair cell by the popular fan artist Laura Watton.



Results of the convention questionnaire were tight in places, but here are a few of the choices:
FAVOURITE MALE CHARACTER: Dark Schneider.
FAVOURITE FEMALE CHARACTER: Tie between Yuri and Ryoko.
FAVOURITE OTHER: Ryo Ohki.
BEST ANIME: Tie between Macross Plus, Oh My Goddess! and Tenchi.
BEST SOUNDTRACK: Macross Plus.
BEST SHOWER SCENE: Silent Mobius (note that someone voted for TOTORO?!?).
BEST UK DUB: Tenchi Muyo.
BEST UK SUB: Oh My Goddess!



Following the awards was the popular 'Politically Incorrect T-Shirt Competition.' It's probably best not to go into any detail here, but let's just say that I'll never look at a fluffy Totoro in the same way again...

It just remains to thank the committee for a marvellous time, and if you are interested in attending next year's convention (I strongly advise it), then just contact them at the address below.

[illegible]
Denzil Brown - Chairman
David Row - Secretary and Video Program
Jeremy Green - Treasurer and Technical
Martin Fay - Hotel Liaison and Registration
Lewis Sharman - Information and Badge Maker
Richard Pelley - Publicity
Jim McLennan - Late Night Video
Harry Payne - General Liaison
Geoff Cowie and John Gosling - Conbook Editors and Producers

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION (send SSAE): RecontainmeTed 1996, L. Sharman, 13 Prescott Close, Banbury, OXON OX16 0XD
Phone 0295 256284
Or E-Mail
davidrow@ryoohki.demon.co.uk or denzil@chiisai.demon.co.uk



The ideal place to lighten the strain on your wallet - the Dealers Room.

WIN! KIKKOU KAMEN 1+2 Q14. GO NAGAI CREATED WHICH OF THESE CHARACTERS?
A. BABEL II B. CUTEY HONEY C. MIGHTY ATOM D. DEPUTY DAWG

Some of the big fish in a little pond. Some of the top names in the anime fan area were unsuspectedly caught on camera (well, sort of).



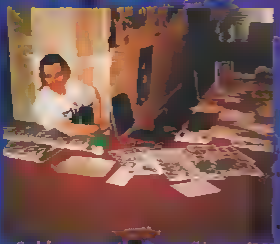
The Gaijin Press Overlord, Josh 'ONI' Clark, looking particularly happy with his beer...



Fan artist Laura Watton makes a secret 'Sign of the Devil'.



Keith McDowell, creator of fan manga 'Lucy's In Deep'



Writer Robert Lyn Davies tries to sell us his Dojinshi.

CRIPES, WHAT A DILEMMA!

A quick guide to only a fraction of what was on show.

KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE

A delightful Miyazaki piece, dealing with a young female witch who goes to the city to make a success of her personal delivery service. Typically brilliant animation from The Master, with a charming setting and all the little touches that make this rise above the standard anime movie.



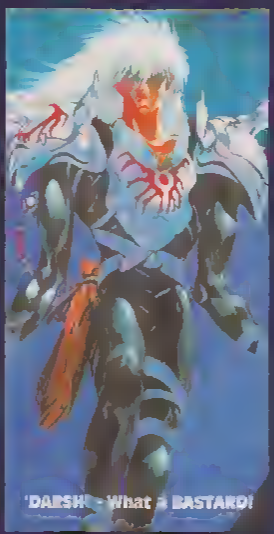
Jiji, the cat, from the delightful KIKI'S DELIVERY SERVICE

IRRESPONSIBLE CAPTAIN TYLOR

As you will have gathered from our lead article this issue (if not, why not?!, Tylor is a lazy good-for-nothing who manages to luck his way through the most difficult situations. Only two episodes were shown (more! more!), and they were both hilariously funny. Please will someone release this in the UK!

CITY HUNTER - A MAGNUM OF LOVE AND BUSTING

Very popular in it's time, City Hunter follows 'sweeper' (bodyguard/private eye) Ryo Saeba and his partner Kaori. Managing to out-lech Ataru Moroboshi with ease, some of the best moments are when Ryo is discovered by Kaori and promptly 'told off' with a 100 ton hammer, or similar implement of destruction. Mixed with some smart action, a bit of drama and a brilliant soundtrack, this was one of the best anime shown. MOKKORI!



'DAIBSHI' - What a BASTARD!

BASTARD!

This is rapidly becoming one of my favourites. Mixing the fantasy genre with a good dose of comedy and self-mockery certainly did this a world of good. Nowhere else would you get a place called Anthrarax or a spell named Guns 'N Rol The ultra-cool lead Dark Schneider had the audience laughing into the small hours.

GHOST SWEEPER MIKAMI

The anime version of GHOSTBUSTERS (except there's only one of them, and she's female). Mikami is a leggy red-head, ready to bust any ghost - but only for a price, and a very high one at that. Aided by her lecherous (naturally) partner, the two episodes shown gave an introduction to the characters while Mikami dealt with an unsettled spirit on a snowy mountain and some ghosts who wanted to rob a bank. Very funny stuff.

Other showings of particular merit were MAISON IKKOKU, ORANGE ROAD, VILLGUST and CAT GIRL NUKU NUKU (subtitled). Painfully, the much awaited EVANGELION was shown at night, but very few people knew of this and were mightily peeved afterwards (to say the least).

WIN! GREEN LEGEND RAN POSTERS Q13. WHAT DOES RAN MEAN IN JAPANESE? A. DESOLATE B. CHAOS C. HOPE D. CUDDLY

KOICHI OHATA Q&A

by Jim Swallow

Koichi Ohata is perhaps best known for his work on high-speed, high-body count, high-concept cyberpunk actioners like Manga Video's recent hit GENOCYBER, a story of psychic twins melded into a superhuman killing machine. With Ohata directing this three-part series based on the comics of Tony Takezaki, he has blazed onto the UK anime scene. His first directing stint came on the Original Animation Video series CYGUARO: CYBERNETIC GUARDIAN, after which he went to work on GENOCYBER and his most favoured project, MD GEIST. An accomplished designer by the age of thirty-three, Ohata created mecha and monsters for the aforementioned shows, as well as inventing the hardware for GUNBUSTER, MACROSS II, MOBILE SUIT GUNDAM, the PATLABOR OAV series and several live action 'sentai' ("Power Rangers" style) shows. Wherever his work appears, Ohata's bio-organic styling crossing genetic and mechanical imagery, is disturbing and striking. Ohata is now the first Japanese mecha designer to bring his work to the West, in a team-up with video distributor Central Park Media's newly-formed CPM Comics line. Co-drawing the art with American comics artist Tim Eldred (CAPTAIN HARLOCK, LENSMAN, STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE), the comic will be a three part MD GEIST miniseries adapting the anime. We caught up with him at California's ANIME EXPO '95 convention for a few questions.



Q: How do you feel about your work's popularity in the UK and the West?
A: I saw the English dub of MD GEIST at a convention and I enjoyed it, it was nicely done and of a very good quality. It's very interesting and very rewarding to see that my style of animation is becoming popular in the West and in the UK. I consider my style to be 'cyberpunk', and it is good to see my (cyberpunk) titles being enjoyed in Europe.

Q: That style is very popular in the West. GENOCYBER has a very organic, very different look to it - does it take a long time to create that?
A: Usually when I design

something for an anime, I have an idea of what to do one or two years before the title is produced, so yes it does take a long time to come up with the organic styling.

Q: That look is also seen in your other work, like MD GEIST, but you have also worked on MACROSS II, GUNBUSTER, GUNDAM and PATLABOR where the designs are much smoother, more sharp-edged. Is it difficult to alternate between the organic and inorganic styles of drawing?
A: If there is some design that already exists, I can take that image into consideration, into my creativity, but if I have to come up with something I've never done before, something that has never been seen, it takes a long time. If there is something already there, it's easier to imitate it or draw from it, but if there is nothing I must stretch my imagination.

Q: You have a lot of cyberpunk elements in your stories, with cybernetics and biotechnology; do you read a lot of science-fiction books for inspiration?
A: I have read a lot of SF novels and seen a lot of movies in the cyberpunk style, like BLADE RUNNER... It's a good movie! A lot of people have learned a lot from that film. But for near future stories, we have to create and add more to what BLADE RUNNER offered us.

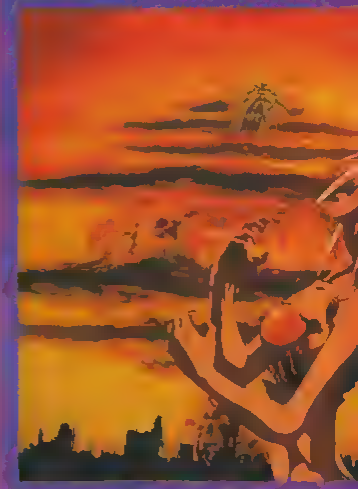
Q: There's a lot of difference between PATLABOR (serious police mecha drama) and NG KNIGHT LAMUNE & 40 (cute fantasy comedy adventure), and yet you worked on both.
A: I worked on LAMUNE because the director was a friend. Although I do like something cute, I think I accelerate my ability when it's something hard. I prefer hard science-fiction.

Q: Do you have a favourite science-fiction movie?
A: There are many that I've been influenced by. I've seen so many, I don't know where to begin... I've seen a lot of American and European SF and horror movies on video.



Q: Do you try to work for your audience, to give them what they want?
A: My goal is to stimulate the viewer's brain and shake their body! Although my work is science-fiction, I want my viewers to experience it as if it were real.

Q: When did you know that you wanted to be an artist, a mecha designer?
A: I don't recall when I decided to be an artist...



When I realised I was an artist, I was already there! I was doing monster and mecha design, even though I began initially working as a script and story-writer.

Q: What was your first big break-through in the anime business?
A: MD GEIST was originally released over ten years ago in Japan, and it was the first project that taught me a lot, it made me realise that if you put your effort into it you can achieve something.

Q: You're the first anime creator to work with American comic artists, with the MD GEIST miniseries on sale from CPM; How do you feel about that?
A: Two years ago I was initially approached by Central Park Media to do this comicbook... I was very surprised, but also very happy that this could happen. This has given me another inspiration and challenge, and I'm very happy to work with Central Park Media on this project.

Q: What other MD GEIST projects will you be working on?
A: I'm working on a prequel

WIN! MEMORIES GRAPHIC NOVEL. Q17. IN WHAT FILM DID HARRISON FORD LOSE HIS MEMORY? A. WITNESS B. PATRIOT GAMES C. REGARDING HENRY D.STAR WARS



comic to the first MD GEIST video, and after that there will be an MD GEIST PART 2 video and comicbook series... At this moment, we have planned this much, but after the release of MD GEIST 2 we will see what happens! I see this project as very challenging, and I'm happy to hear that the readers enjoy it. I'll keep putting more effort into it as long as fans are being it.

Q: What do you think of the MD GEISY comics?
A: A dream come true! I'm very happy to see my comicbook published in this country, and I'm flattered to be among the Western artists.

Q: What's your opinion on Western comics?
A: I like Simon Bisley's (ABC WARRIORS, SLAIN, LOBO) and Todd McFarlane's (SPAWN) artwork - they inspire me, and I like their works... Recently I have come across GHOST (by Adam Hughes), and although I don't know much about the background I like the style and the design.

Q: Are you attracted to work like Bisley's and McFarlane's because of the monster designs?
A: My way to appreciate beauty or scary subjects in comics comes from the way I perceived those things as a child. When I look at Western comicbooks I base my opinion on childhood experiences; it's difficult to define, but often my characters are as complex, and some regard them as beautiful and others as scary.

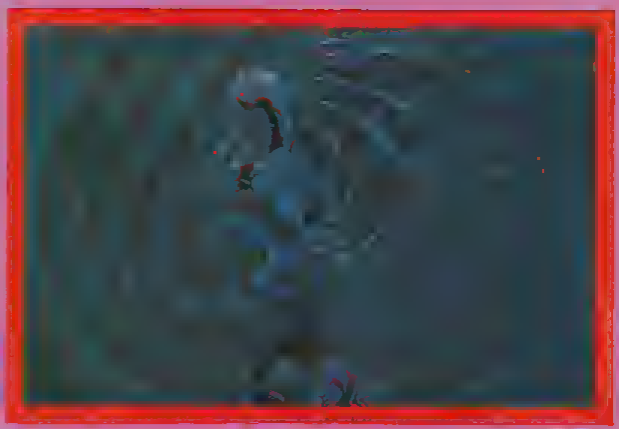
Q How did you get to see the American comicbooks in Japan?
A. When I come to the U.S.A. I just pick them up,I go to comic shops and newsstands and pick out the covers that really stand out

Q. What do you work on at home in Japan?
A: As a freelancer, I do a lot of things, I work on comicbooks, I direct animation, I write scripts and do mecha design. How I am perceived in Japan is hard to say, but a lot of my colleagues are aware that my work is more popular outside Japan, so they have been asking me why. Sometimes I'm flattered, but sometimes it's difficult

Q: You have designed mecha and monsters for anime shows and live action shows; is there a lot of difference?
A- Yes, a lot. In animation a design is two-dimensional, but on a live show it must be in three dimensions... In animation as well, you must think of the other people who will draw the design later, but in live action you don't have to make it that definite... You hand it over to the other creators and they refine it. I can't really say which is more difficult, but in live action it is good to see a design become a real object.

Q: You have a lot of humanism in your plots, even though there is also a lot of inhuman mecha and cybernetics in them; is this a conscious message?
A. That's right. I always try to keep a humanist message in all my work, and if I can get that across to my viewers, I'm happy. It's not all about violence and actions, I try to have a human element. It's challenging to keep that in there, but I try.

Koichi Ohata's MD GEIST miniseries from CPM Comics is available on import in the UK and the anime version of the story is planned for a 1996 release by Kiseki Films. The MD GEIST PART 2 and MD GEISY 0 prequal comics will be on sale next year. Ohata's other work, GENOCYBER, is available on three tapes from Manga Video



WIN! GCN GRAPHIC NOVEL Q12. WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A FAMOUS DINOSAUR?
A. REX B. DINO C. GODZILLA D. LEONARO NIMOY

ZINE zone



I LOVE LUCY

No, we're not talking crap '50s B&W sit coms, but a major new UK fan manga by Keith McDowell, called LUCY'S IN DEEP . The Ed puts on his hental costume and prepares for a bit of leching ('Ere, leave it out. Ed).

THE STORYLINE

LUCY S IN DEEP is a fairly straight forward tale
A young policewoman gets an undercover assignment as a high school student with the aim of breaking up a drugs ring operating at the local high school. The trouble is she not only has to smash the drugs ring but also keep her identity secret from her new peer group AND finish her maths homework!! Add to this the fact that the drug pusher is an ex-con that Lucy only recently arrested and things start to get a little tricky

THE STORY

The story in LUCY #1 is well written and introduces you to the majority of the main characters we're going to be seeing. Ok, this is a moral tale but while not being heavy in it s message the point is clear enough. Being set in a high school it also helps the reader to associate with the characters and situations that occur (drugs young love bullies etc)

THE ARTWORK

Keith is definitely creating a style of his own which I m sure will become instantly recognisable as time goes on. A noticeable feature of this issue is that backgrounds are often left out or are at least simplified. Surprisingly this does not really detract from the artwork, but tends to emphasise the main pictures and focus your eye on what s important. His use of gray tone is also good without labouring the point too much



WHAT DOMU GRAPHIC NOVEL CVD. IN WHAT LANGUAGE WAS DOMU ORIGINALLY WRITTEN?
A. JAPANESE B. CHINESE C. MALAYSIAN D. SANSKRIT

Having seen many of his one-shot drawings some of the art does look rushed and if Keith can find the energy to take as much care over each frame in LUCY as he does in his individual illustrations, then he will without a doubt be one of the major stars of the future But this IS only the first issue of a FAN manga and a little practice brings a lot of improvement so issue 2 will be one to look out for

One thing you do notice about the art - the girls This is one area where Keith is particularly good especially for a fan artist and he s got just the right amount of cute in them to give them the perfect look But don t take my word for it See for yourself

OVERALL

For the very first issue of a new fan manga this is very impressive The artwork and story are of a good standard, with professional printing and a full colour cover, and with time I can see this becoming a very high quality title I can recommend this to everyone especially if you are thinking of starting up your own zine but need the inspiration of seeing a completed work to push you over the line

LUCY'S IN DEEP issue #1 is 56 pages, B&W with a full colour cover.

Cover price is £1 60 (£2.00 inc p&p mail order). Available off the shelf from POSSIDEON PLANET or direct from Keith at: FUTURE FACTORY, KESTON, LOW ROAD, SAXINGHAM, WOODBRIDGE, SUFFOLK, IP13 6NF





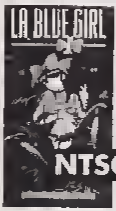






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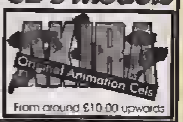
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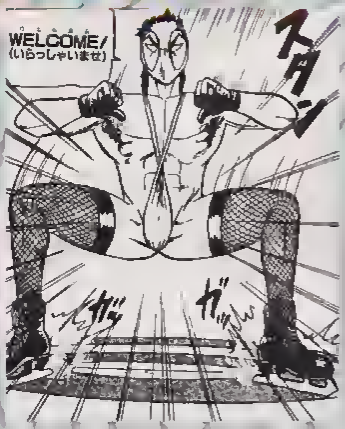
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WIN! RANMA 1/2 GRAPHIC NOVELS 1+2 Q28. WHICH OF THESE IS NOT BY RUMIKO TAKAHASHI? A. LUM B. ONE POUND GOSPEL C. PINK TRIPPER D. TENCHI MUYO



KYUKY HENTAI

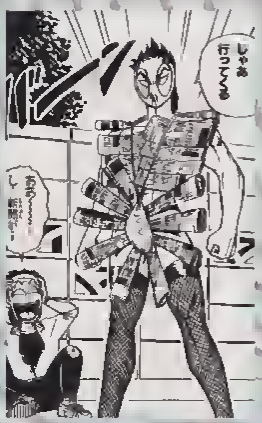
Created by Keisyu Ando and originally run in Shonen Jump, HENTAI KAMEN has been collected into 6 handy volumes. We give you the run down on one of the funniest manga around.



To the casual observer, especially one who is not initiated into the world of manga, HENTAI KAMEN appears to be some kind of bizarrely perverse comic that only a real weirdo would read, and one that could only come from somewhere like Japan. Although this last statement is most probably true, anyone with the courage to actually pick up a copy and read it may well find themselves eating their words.

In Japan, HENTAI KAMEN not surprisingly holds a kind of cult status, and it goes far beyond the norm of the standard superhero comic. Sure, Superman wore underwear on the outside but never like this, and it was always HIS OWN underwear! As a parody of the superhero genre, the thing that makes it so hilariously funny is the sheer extremity of it all, and because you would never see something like this created in the west, it holds a certain kind of perverse 'charm'.

The basic plot is simple - every time that student Kyosuke Shikijo discovers some pantles, he slaps them on his face, tosses off most of his clothes and becomes a superhero, often saving the day from bullies, robber









WIN! STREET FIGHTER II GRAPHIC NOVEL. Q21 WHICH OF THESE MACHINES HAS SFII NOT APPEARED ON? A. PLAYSTATION B. PC ENGINE C. SNES D. 3DO

YOKU!! KAMEN



and the like. Fairly formulaic it may seem (!) but it's appeal comes from the way that this is done. Hentai Kamen may often appear to the bad guys after they mistake his posing pouch for something as innocent as a vegetable, or American football, and disposing the enemy is done by either the faithful groin-in-the-face routine, or some kind of wonderfully unique attack.

Even though the humour is overly genital, it is much like the CITY HUNTER manga in that it's totally harmless, and if anything, HENTAI KAMEN reverses the typical stereotypes by showing that female superheroes aren't the only ones who can prance around in skimpy outfits!

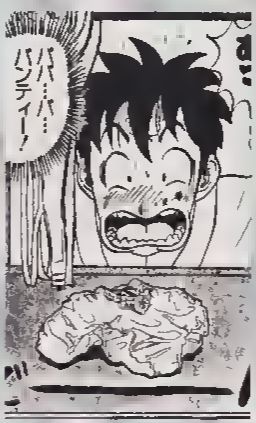
For anyone who can't read Japanese, the humour is not lost. It's very easy to follow and contains so many visual gags that it shows that you don't have to read it to understand it. Due to the nature of the material, it is VERY unlikely that it will ever be translated into English and if an anime version ever came out, there is no doubt that it would not get a UK release. So my advice to you is to track it down now, before you miss out on something unique and end up regretting it.

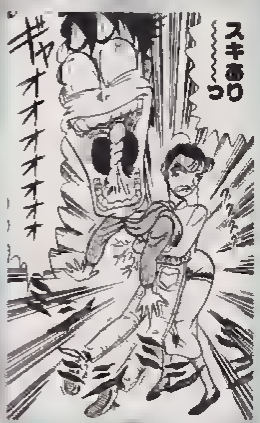
HENTAI KAMEN is published by Jump Comics and you should be able to find it in specialist manga or Japanese bookshops like Books Asahiya in Yaohan Plaza, London.











WIN A MAN VIDEOS Q22 WHAT IS THE COLOUR OF AN 8 BALL IN POOL?
A WHITE B YELLOW C BLACK D TRANSPARENT

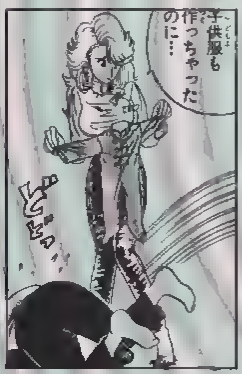
THE CAST



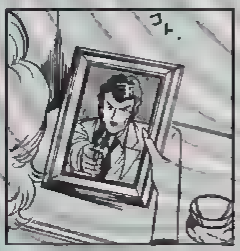
KYOSUKE SHIKIJO
A first year student at Koyu Highschool, Kyosuke is also a member of the school s kenpo club holding 2nd Dan. He is an all round nice guy and as righteous as they come. He is seemingly a normal, well adjusted person however,



HENTAI KAMEN
Inside the body of this everyday student sleeps the blood of a hentai (pervert, deviant etc) Whenever Kyosuke chances upon a pair of girls panties, he has an uncontrollable urge placing them over his face and transforming into the ultimate superhero - HENTAI KAMEN!



MAKI SHIKIJO (KYOSUKE'S MOTHER)
Maki is a blonde beauty who by day runs the lingerie boutique CANDLE' But one thing separates her from the everyday single mother - she is a screaming SM freak who likes nothing better than pouring hot candle wax on poor Kyosuke s back and whipping him As this kind of upbringing is unlikely to leave anyone unaffected it goes some way to explain Kyosuke s transformations



KYOSUKE'S FATHER
Looking, and acting a little too much like Dirty Harry Kyosuke's father was a detective killed in the line of duty. He met Maki while doing a raid on the SM club SODOM where she was working as a part-time mistress



AIKO HIMENO
Aiko first met Kyosuke when he saved her from a pack of bullies at school Since then they were obviously rather taken with each other but prevailing events have made it difficult for them to really get close This matter is not helped by Aiko s butler who is constantly spying on them from wherever possible Aiko is very, very rich and suffers from the most bizarre of phobias she is petrified of the male nether regions which often causes her to faint in terror whenever Hentai Kamen jumps into action

WIN! BABEL II PT 1 Q25. IN WHICH BOOK DID THE TOWER OF BABEL FIRST APPEAR?
A THE BIBLE B LORD OF THE RINGS C THE SATANIC BIBLE D TALES FROM THE MOS EISLEY CANTINA

An Introduction To Japan

Welcome to the first of what will hopefully be a regular section in J-FAN Most fans of Japanese animation and manga will have at some time wished they could visit the Land of the Rising Sun itself But as I m sure most of you will have found out it s not cheap Well two years ago I was lucky enough to have the chance to spend three weeks yes **three** weeks in that wonderful country Travelling from Tokyo to Kyoto down to Hiroshima and back again it was certainly an experience for the first time solo traveller (and one I would thoroughly recommend)

The aim of this section is to bring you just a *hint* of what it was like and to let you see some of the places I used to just dream about seeing As I mentioned earlier it wasn't cheap The whole three weeks set me back almost £2000 (even though I was staying with friends) The average off-peak flight is around £600 (if you shop around) rising to about £900 in high season I went at the end of March with Virgin Atlantic and was lucky enough to catch the cherry blossoms which are only in bloom for a few weeks each year

One thing I did discover while over in Japan is that you do not need to speak the language to get by (but a little bit and a dictionary helps) Now I had taken a year's night school (1 hour/week) and had a very basic grasp of the language but not to the effect of stringing together a conversation especially with jet lag and culture shock lasting for half the holiday! Still I found that nearly everyone either (a) spoke English (b) wanted to practise their English on me or (c) looked at me rather funnily as I tried to ask for a seat at the cinema with a pocket E-J dictionary and a bag stuffed with anime goodies (Hey they were showing Dragon Ball and I wasn t going to miss that)

Anyway as I was saying over the next few months we ll go around the places I visited and try to give you a first hand view of the sights and maybe some places to visit if you're going We start next issue with Hiroshima so I ll see you then



A wonderful landscape in a Japanese park



Japan s famous cherry blossoms overlook a village



Akihabara Toky The Electronic District



A shrine on M

PARODY



THE PAGE WITH NO NAME

Due to printing deadlines, train schedules and the wind speed on Thursdays, we haven't time to print any of your letters or pics in this issue, but keep 'em coming and thanks to everyone who has written in already. I'm glad to say that so far we've had nothing but praise, so we must be doing something right!

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WIN! IRON FIST CHINMI SETS Q24. WHICH OF THESE IS NOT A JACKIE CHAN FILM?
A DRUNKEN MASTER B ABOVE THE LAW C NEW FIST OF FURY D CITY HUNTER

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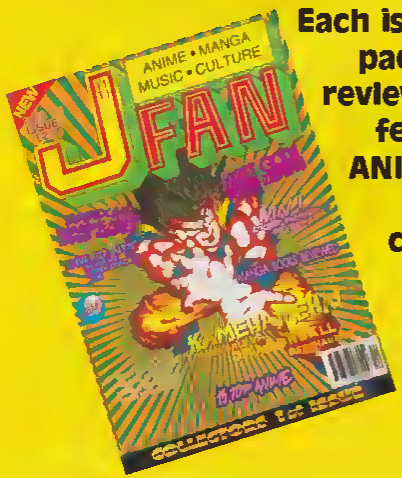
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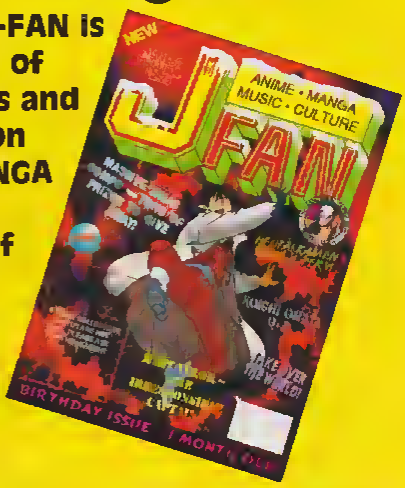
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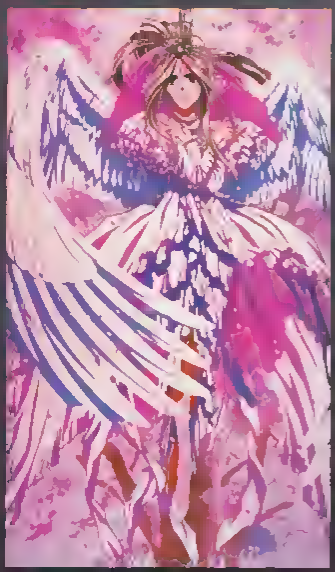
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